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HENRY S. ROWEN

Executive Registry

84- 10272

December 6, 1984

Mr. William Casey
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
7D60 Headquarters
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Bill:

You might be interested in seeing the latest piece of mine on arms control due to come out in The Wall Street Journal in a week or so.

Best wishes,



Henry S. Rowen

Enclosure

cc: Robert Gates



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Putting Arms Control Below the SALT

As his second term begins, the President clearly wants an arms agreement with the Soviets. Moreover, he is being told that things have changed in Moscow: its leadership is uncertain, its economy is faltering, its attempt to split NATO has failed, it needs a respite. So the President now has a unique opportunity. Again.

We do need to think about agreements that might actually restrain the Soviets as well as ourselves. But we need to remember that we are in the midst of regaining ground in defense that we have lost in the past 20 years, years of negotiating agreements with Moscow.

We shouldn't abandon "the shared view of nuclear defense that underlies not only the ABM Treaty but all our later negotiations on strategic weapons" say McGeorge Bundy, George Kennan, Robert McNamara and Gerard Smith in the current Foreign Affairs. But the Soviet leaders have not shared our views; they built up as we built down for 20 years, almost eliminating our air defenses, dropping civil defense, reducing spending on offensive forces and their megatonnage. Moscow has never shared the peculiar American view of arms control. It has sought and obtained a relative increase in its military power. To Moscow, the functions of arms control are to slow us where we have a technical advantage (e.g. ballistic missile defenses in the early 1970s) or are behind and are about to move out (anti-satellite weapons today); to prevent deployments intended to strengthen U.S. ties to Europe, (block NATO's intermediate range missiles); to try to preserve a Soviet advantage ("heavy" missiles in SALT I) and so on.

The overall strategy into which Soviet arms negotiating fits is focused on expanding its control especially near its periphery: Europe, Persian

Gulf, Central Asia, China. To support this expansion they want more, and more effective (i.e. accurate, protected, controllable) arms than their opponents, both conventional and nuclear. The many new long range missiles and bombers that naturally preoccupy Americans are intended to deter us from defending our interests elsewhere. Failing that, these weapons are for actual use against our forces in, or moving toward, the areas of direct conflict, or even, if necessary, on our forces at their source. Marshal Ogarkov has told his troops: "The possibility is recognized of conducting protracted military operations with conventional weapons alone and, in individual theaters of military operations, even with the limited use of nuclear weapons." When Ogarkov and other Soviet spokesmen speak to the West, however, they usually send a different message such as "any use of nuclear weapons will inevitably lead to the immediate use of the sides entire arsenals." But there is no place in Soviet doctrine for "unlimited" or suicidal nuclear war.

Their vast investments in anti-aircraft and anti-missile defenses, and civil defenses (high quality for elites, low for the masses) are made by people who do not share a belief that the use of one or a few nuclear weapons will end the world. Although we judge that many of these Soviet investments wouldn't help them much, the seriousness of Soviet preparations for war - including nuclear war - is impressive. Another measure of seriousness is the share of Soviet GNP devoted to nuclear offensive and defensive forces: over three times that of the U.S. (almost twice the expenditure measured in dollars out of an economy about one-half as big). This doesn't mean that they take a casual view of nuclear war, or any kind of war for that matter. It means they are more serious about it than we.

The U.S. is the big obstacle to the Soviet strategy. Therefore, a primary Soviet aim in negotiating, as well as in arms, is to weaken and fragment our alliances and eventually exclude us from Eurasia. Last year the main Soviet negotiating effort was to stop any deployment of our missiles in Europe. This year they are concentrating on slowing or stopping its completion, with the Netherlands and Belgium being the focal points of pressure.

Moscow has learned that it can get help from dedicated Western arms controllers who will work to kill troublesome U.S. programs such as highly accurate, long range cruise missiles while it pursues such programs with unrelenting vigor. There will be protests that we mustn't do anything in the President's Strategic Defense Initiative that conceivably could be construed as violating the ABM Treaty such as developing a defense against medium or short range, theater weapons—even though the Treaty clearly prohibits a defense only against "strategic" weapons. Meanwhile, the Soviets are moving out from under the Treaty, violating it as well as other understandings.

All of this poses a formidable set of problems for the West. The enormous growth of Soviet nuclear strength has eroded what was a major deterrent to Soviet moves on its periphery. That change, together with ground force increases, its creation of a "blue water" navy, and a big expansion of long range airlift and access to nearby foreign airspace, makes such moves more effective and less dangerous. Although nuclear weapons have been progressively less useful in discouraging the Soviets, we need these weapons to deter their nuclear attack and they have some residual value in deterring non-nuclear attack on areas vital to us. Given these changes,

American threats to commit homicide on a large scale—and therefore suicide—in response to a limited attack aren't worth much anymore. The upshot is that we should both steadily reduce our dependence on nuclear weapons and continue to improve our ability to use them (if we have to) in less suicidal, i.e. more discriminate ways. In doing so, our main competitive advantage is to exploit fully our technological superiority in making smarter, more accurate, more controllable, "stealthier," weapons. Preventing this is a principal Soviet aim in arms control negotiations.

All this argues for making our nuclear forces as effective as possible against Soviet military forces within the resources available. These resources provide us about 11,000 nuclear weapons on 2,000 long range missiles and bombers; 4,000 to 5,000 of these have a good chance of surviving a well-executed sudden Soviet attack. This substantial number of weapons, allowing for malfunctions and losses, could destroy a wide range of Soviet targets including ground, air and naval forces, lines of communication and nuclear offensive forces - while holding in reserve a large enough force to give the Soviets an extra incentive not to make the all out attack on our cities that we have feared - but for which we have no good reason to believe they have ever planned. We have self interest as well as a moral interest in not inflicting great damage on Poles, Czechs, Balts, and other innocent civilians as a by-product of attack on military targets. Being capable only of doing indiscriminate damage not only would increase the likelihood of receiving such damage ourselves but, much more likely, would lead us to collapse politically in a crisis.

Bureaucratic inertia as well as the ideology of MAD has kept us from fully exploiting the emerging technologies of accurate guidance. The

potential exists for accuracy measured in a few feet with terminal guidance of cruise missiles. Nor have we pursued energetically enough the less indiscriminately destructive nuclear munitions that higher accuracies make possible. The failure to fully pursue such technologies is reflected in the fact that, after a long period of decline in our warhead yields, many are now scheduled to increase in yield. We are also short of missiles accurate enough to destroy key Soviet facilities with confidence, an objective that the Scowcroft Commission described as being "able to put at risk those types of Soviet targets - including hardened ones such as military command bunkers and facilities, missile silos... which the Soviet leaders have given every indication by their actions they value most."

Our land-based ICBMs are also highly vulnerable in their silos, and probably only a combination of mobility with new small missiles, hardening, deceptive basing, and perhaps missile defenses will make them survivable. As for solving this vulnerability problem through arms control, no feasible constraint on Soviet forces is going to enable ordinary silo-based ICBMs to survive given basic trends in the accuracy of Soviet weapons.

We should also station long-range cruise missiles throughout the fleet, on existing submarines and surface ships. Doing so complicates the Soviet attack problem and gives us a weapon with high accuracy, over time useful for conventional as well as nuclear missions.

Despite all of this, our negotiators are headed for Geneva. That being so, we could do worse than have four more years of palaver while each side pursues his own programs; at least that would be better than signing more bad agreements. But are there no possible agreements of value to us as well as the Soviets? We have a few now: for instance, the agreement not to

poison the atmosphere with radioactivity (the atmospheric test ban) on avoiding military incidents or accidents (the agreement on "rules of the road" to avoid naval incidents and the Moscow-Washington Hot Line), and efforts to slow the spread of nuclear weapons (through non-proliferation undertakings). Looking ahead, agreements might be sought on "rules of the road" for military satellites in space (but not by trying to ban anti-satellite weapons which the Soviets have—and inevitably will possess—and want us not to have); discussions on avoiding a possible global "nuclear winter" from the massive use of nuclear weapons against cities; or further steps to slow the spread of nuclear weapons.

Missing here is negotiation to shrink nuclear forces. It isn't that all 11,000 offensive warheads or 2,000 delivery vehicles are vital to our survival. The law of diminishing marginal utility applies. But when we try to limit forces by agreement, we get mostly self restraint and the illusion of Soviet restraint. As the illusion is gradually stripped away, as on SALT, we hesitate to react because it is painful to face reality. In fact, there is no important U.S. objective related to the balance of nuclear forces, or the role of these forces in discouraging Soviet moves abroad, which is attainable through any remotely feasible arms control agreement with Moscow. Nor will the Soviets agree to anything that will cause them to abandon their aim of splitting our alliances or hinder them in coercing the democracies. This does leave a potential role for arms control in preventing dangerous incidents or global nuclear effects or dealing with the spread of nuclear weapons.

If we want a better protected and more discriminate nuclear force - and if possible a less costly one - we will have to get it on our own.

Within the resources available, the vulnerable MX is, at best, the marginal project despite its virtue of improving our hard-target attack capacity. Its budget would probably be better spent on other weapons, nuclear or non-nuclear. To try to use MX, which is barely surviving in Congress, as a bargaining chip with the Soviets, as proposed by the Scowcroft Commission, suggests that they can't count votes.

Henry Kissinger wrote in 1957: "the emphasis of traditional diplomacy on 'good faith' and 'willingness to come to an agreement' is a positive handicap when it comes to dealing with a power dedicated to overthrowing the international system. For it is precisely 'good faith' and 'willingness to come to an agreement' which are lacking...." The scope for agreements with a power that regards the very existence of the democracies as a threat to its existence is more limited than is suggested by the notion of Bundy and company of our "shared views."

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Henry S. Rowen is Professor of Public Management at the Graduate School of Business and Senior Research Fellow of the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. He is former Chairman of the National Intelligence Council, CIA and President of the Rand Corporation.